

REMARKS

Following a prior restriction requirement and a subsequent election, Claims 11-13 have been withdrawn as being non-elected and Claims 1-10 have been substantively examined. Of these, the Official Action rejects Claims 1-3, 6, 7 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,263,941 to Michael A. Bryan, et al. Further, Claims 4 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Bryan '941 patent. Finally, Claims 5 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Bryan '941 patent in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,152,857 to Tatsuo Ito, et al. As described in detail below, neither of the references, taken either individually or in combination, teaches or suggests the intermediate wafer assembly of the claimed invention. Based on the following remarks, reconsideration of present application and allowance of the current set of claims is therefore respectfully requested.

Independent Claims 1 and 6 are directed to an intermediate wafer assembly having a handle wafer and a bonded wafer attached to the handle wafer. The bonded wafer includes a first major surface facing away from the handle wafer and a second major surface facing toward the handle wafer. Independent Claims 1 and 6 also define the bonded wafer to include "an angled edge segment adjacent the first major surface that extends linearly at a predefined angle relative to a reference plane defined by the first major surface" and a curved or radiused edge segment extending continuously from the angled edge segment to the second major surface of the bonded wafer. By including an angled edge segment, the intermediate wafer assembly may be more readily handled by an automated wafer handling system. For example, the intermediate wafer assembly may be more readily grasped or engaged by a chuck or other holding device.

The Official Action alleges that the Bryan '941 patent discloses an angled edge segment adjacent a first major surface. In this regard, the Official Action included an annotated version of Figure 1A from the Bryan '941 patent. The same annotated version of Figure 1A of the Bryan '941 patent that appeared on page 3 of the Official Action is reproduced below for purposes of reference:

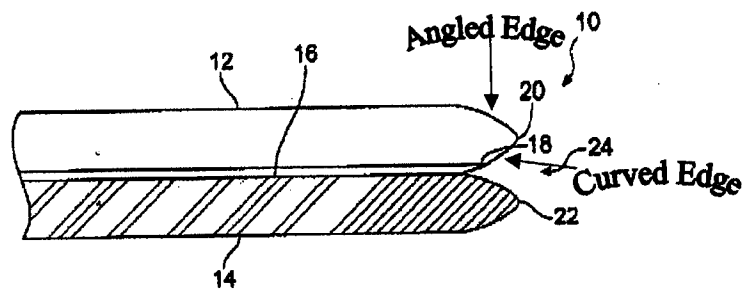


FIG. 1A

As will be noted from the annotated version of Figure 1A reproduced above, the edge segment that is considered by the Official Action to correlate to the angled edge segment of independent Claims 1 and 6 is not, in fact, an angled edge segment, but is a curved edge segment. Indeed, the edge segment that is designated by the Official Action to correlate to the angled edge segment appears in Figure 1A to be the mirror image of the other edge segment that is designated as a curved edge segment by the Official Action. It is also noted that independent Claims 1 and 11 define the angled edge segment to extend linearly at a predefined angle relative to a reference plane defined by the first major surface. See, for example, Figure 3 of the present application in which the predefined angle is designated as α . In contrast, the edge segment designated by the Official Action to correlate to the angled edge segment does not extend linearly, but is, instead, curved, thereby extending, not at a predefined angle, but at a range of angles relative to the reference plane defined by the first major surface.

Not only does the Bryan '941 patent fail to teach or suggest an intermediate wafer assembly having a bonded wafer with an angled edge segment, but the Ito '857 patent also fails to teach or suggest an intermediate wafer assembly having a handle wafer and a bonded wafer with an angled edge segment as set forth by independent Claims 1 and 6 and, indeed, the Ito '857 patent was not cited for this proposition. Based upon the foregoing, it is submitted that neither the Bryan '941 patent nor the Ito '857 patent nor any combination thereof teaches or suggest the intermediate wafer assembly of independent Claims 1 and 6, as well as the claims which depend therefrom. Accordingly, the rejections of Claims 1-10 are therefore submitted to be overcome.

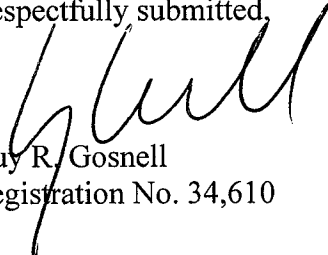
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Amdt. dated July 20, 2007
Reply to Office action of March 20, 2007

CONCLUSION

In view of the remarks presented above, it is respectfully submitted that all of the present claims of the present application are in condition for immediate allowance. It is therefore respectfully requested that a Notice of Allowance be issued. The Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney to resolve any remaining issues in order to expedite examination of the present application.

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 CFR § 1.136(a), and any fee required therefore (including fees for net addition of claims) is hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 16-0605.

Respectfully submitted,



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